

the very idea and call, as the previous speaker just did, tax cuts giveaways.

Republicans are insisting that we begin to reverse the dangerous decline in our military preparedness. Democrats have been fighting for even less defense.

Republicans blocked a White House attempt to impose national standardized tests in elementary schools. Democrats urged the creation of a national gun registry in their latest effort to weaken second amendment rights.

Republicans stopped the President's big government initiative to create a new handout, free needles for drug addicts. Democrats tried to create a national identity card. Republicans stopped that, too.

Bigger government versus smaller government and more freedom, that is what is at stake. That is what this budget battle has been about over these last few weeks.

FAILING MARKS TO REPUBLICAN CONGRESS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, for 2 years this Republican Congress has put partisanship ahead of progress. They have consistently kowtowed to special interests. They killed HMO reform, campaign finance reform, tobacco reform, and attempted to raid the Social Security trust fund. In the last few days Democrats have had to fight tooth and nail to reduce America's class sizes by hiring 100,000 teachers. Now Republicans, it is unbelievable to me that they take such pride in the fact that they have prevented school modernization, denying our kids the opportunity to have our schools wired up to the 21st century and that they could take advantage of the technology that will only help them compete in the 21st century.

Let me just say that this Republican Party is out of touch with mainstream America. I am not the only one who thinks so. Jack Kemp, not a well-known Democrat, and I quote: Today the Republican Party is adrift, without an agenda and without purpose beyond its seeming preoccupation with saving the congressional seats of its incumbents.

This Republican Congress has failed the American people.

THE SURPLUS CONGRESS: HARDLY A RECORD TO BE SCOFFED AT

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, this Republican Congress that has been so maligned by partisan Democrats has been the first Congress since 1969 to balance the budget. It has been the first Congress to have tax cuts in 16

years. It has been the first Congress to reform and protect Medicare on a bipartisan basis. And the first Congress to have welfare reform and 40 percent of the people who were on welfare in 1994 are now independent, working. This is hardly a record to be scoffed at.

What have we done this year? We have protected Social Security. We have stopped the Democrat practice of taking the surplus out of Social Security and spending it on roads and bridges. We have protected the family farm with the farm disaster bill. We have protected education by giving more power to local school boards and less from Washington bureaucracy. And we are on the verge of passing major drug legislation that will give strong interdiction, strong prevention and rehabilitation services. We think this is a solid legacy.

This Congress will be remembered as the surplus Congress. I am proud that I played a part of it.

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A DO-NOTHING CONGRESS? SIMPLY NOT TRUE

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rarely come to these also 1-minutes, but I could not maintain silence after what I have been hearing they say. They say we are a do-nothing Congress, we are not concerned about the average Joe or Jane.

Capital gains tax reduction. The increase of the estate tax exemption threshold, which means that the tax man will be delayed when he comes a calling after someone has lost a loved one. Welfare reform. IRS reform. Balanced Budget Amendment.

Now does anyone in range of my voice believe that either of these five could have been done without a Republican majority in the people's House? Obviously not because it has not been done before.

I keep hearing my friends to my right, to my ideological left, claiming about campaign finance reform, nothing has been done about it. Well, Mr. Speaker, they were in control of the People's House for 40 years, and nothing was done about it.

I am very much offended, Mr. Speaker, by people who come to the well of this House and point an accusatory finger and accuse this 105th Congress of doing nothing. It is simply not true.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my district during Rollcall Votes 532 through 535. Had I been present I would have voted yes on Rollcalls 532 and 533, and no on Rollcall 534, and no on Rollcall 535.

ANOTHER BILLION DOLLARS FOR THE STAR WARS FANTASY

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, Congress would have adjourned one week ago after only 108 days work without an additional penny for public education, but the President held the Republican majority's feet to the fire, and so now, a week later, we have got \$1.2 billion, new money for smaller class size; \$871 million has been replaced for the Summer Jobs for Youth Program that they wanted to kill; \$250 million for Youth Opportunities, and \$160 million add-on to Head Start. This is a victory for Democratic priorities.

But unfortunately this gargantuan 4000-page budget bill further reflects the difference in the budget priorities of the Republicans and the Democrats. The Republicans in this are going to add \$9.1 billion to an already bloated Pentagon budget, another \$1 billion into the Star Wars fantasy where we have already dumped 50 billion with no results. Not a penny, not a penny here on earth, to help rebuild or build new schools, but another billion dollars for the Star Wars fantasy. That is a sad commentary on their priorities.

PROUD OF THE 105TH

(Mr. EHLERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, it is a time of year when we do our retrospectives on what this Congress has accomplished, and we have heard some comments about that already. We have cut taxes for the first time in 16 years; we have balanced the budget for the first time since 1969. Even better than that, we have achieved a surplus, and when I was first elected 5 years ago, we had nearly a \$300 billion deficit in this Congress and for this Nation; today, approximately \$85 billion surplus.

How does that affect us as citizens and legislators of this country? Just an example:

My daughter and her husband are in the process of buying their first house. The interest rates are the lowest they have been in this Nation in many, many years. That is related to our budget surplus because the government is not in the market borrowing an additional \$300 billion, but they are pumping \$85 billion back in, and that reduces interest rates.

Much else has happened in this Congress. I participated in developing the first science policy statement that this Congress has adopted in many years, and that is going to have a real impact on the science and technology and will certainly make our Nation more competitive among all.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a good Congress, and I am proud to have been part of it.